

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 CIEP-02 OMB-01 EB-11 TRSE-00 SCCT-02 SAB-01

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R 021210Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6065

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 4191

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR TS MO AG

SUBJECT: BOURGUIBA VISITS RABAT, ALGIERS

REF: RABAT 3022 (NOTAL); RABAT 2999 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: BOURGUIBA VISITED ALGERIA AND MOROCCO FROM JUNE 27-29 ON RATHER SHORT NOTICE, A VISIT THAT WAS CLEARLY DESIGNED TO DEMONSTRATE THE RESTORATION OF FULL HARMONY OF RELATIONS BETWEEN HIMSELF AND HASSAN II. VISIT TURNED UP LITTLE THAT WAS NOTEWORTHY, HOWEVER, AND THE MANNER OF ITS REPORTING HERE SUGGESTS THAT COOLNESS BETWEEN BOURGUIBA AND HASSAN MAY NOT HAVE BEEN DISSIPATED. END SUMMARY.

2. ON HIS RETURN TO TUNIS AIRPORT JUNE 29 PRES BOURGUIBA MADE A STATEMENT WITHOUT ONCE NAMING KING HASSAN II. ALTHOUGH MOROCCO WAS OBJECT OF EXPEDITION, BOURGUIBA LED OFF SAYING THAT THE TRIP HAD GIVEN HIM A
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USEFUL HOUR'S TALK WITH BOUMEDIENE, WITH WHOM BILATERAL

RELATIONS AND TUNISIAN-ALGERIAN COOPERATION HAD BEEN DISCUSSED. HE SAID THE TWO LEADERS HAD DECIDED TO ADOPT A JOINT POSITION DURING COURSE OF ARAB SUMMIT TO BE HELD IN RABAT IN SEPTEMBER. FURTHER, HE AND BOUMEDIENE HAD AGREED RESOLVE AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE CERTAIN (UNSPECIFIED) PROBLEMS OF BILATERAL COOPERATION WHICH HAVE BEEN IN SUSPENSE. TUNISIAN-ALGERIAN MIXED HIGH COMMISSION WOULD THEREFORE MEET SHORTLY. (COMMENT: MIN INT BELKHODJA LEFT FOR ALGIERS JUNE 30 TO HEAD TUNISIAN DELEGATION TO THE COMMISSION IN PLACE OF FON MIN CHATTI WHO TOLD ME MEETING OF ARAB DEFENSE COUNCIL IN CAIRO PREVENTED HIS ATTENDANCE.)

3. RE MOROCCO, AFTER REFERRING TO JOINT COMMUNIQUE, BOURGUIBA SAID VISIT, THOUGH SHORT, HAD BEEN USEFUL AND FRUITFUL. MOROCCANS HAD ALSO AGREED TO ADOPT A COMMON POSITION WITH TUNISIA AT ARAB SUMMIT, AND BOTH WOULD WAIT FOR RESULTS OF "BATTLEFIELD STATES" SUMMIT BEFORE DETERMINING THAT POSITION. BOURGUIBA ANNOUNCED ESTABLISHMENT OF A MIXED TUNISIAN-MOROCCAN JOINT COMMISSION TO EXPLORE BILATERAL COOPERATION IN ECONOMIC SPHERES OF JOINT INVESTMENTS AND COMPLEMENTARITY BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, IN ORDER STAY CONSTANTLY IN TOUCH AND PURSUE "THE GREAT MARCH" TOWARD CONSTRUCTION OF GREATER ARAB MAGHREB. THIS MAGHREB, THOUGH, SAID BOURGUIBA, WOULD AS A FIRST STEP BE A CONFEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT STATES. IT WOULD PERHAPS TAKE MUCH TIME BEFORE PROGRESSIVE STRENGTHENING OF COOPERATION AND OF ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND COMMERCIAL COMPLEMENTARITY COULD RESULT IN (COMPLETE) UNITY.

4. IN A GENERAL SENSE, HE CONCLUDED, VISIT HAD DISSIPATED FEARS THAT EITHER COUNTRY WOULD TAKE A POSITION AT VARIANCE WITH THAT OF THE OTHER. SUCH FEARS HAVE GIVEN WAY TO A COHESION WHICH AUGURS WELL FOR BILATERAL RELATIONS AND FOR PROGRESS TOWARD THE COMMON IDEAL, THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE GREATER ARAB MAGHREB, ON SOLID AND REALISTIC FOUNDATIONS.

5. FON MIN CHATTI HAD LITTLE TO SAY ABOUT VISIT DURING
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TALK WITH ME JULY 1. IN BOTH ALGIERS AND RABAT HE SAID, TUNISIANS HAD FOUND AGREEMENT THAT THEIR COMMON POSITION AT SUMMIT SHOULD BE TO SUPPORT APPROACH TAKEN BY "BATTLEFIELD STATES", WHATEVER THAT MIGHT TURN OUT TO BE. MAJOR PROBLEM (WHICH PRESUMABLY WAS DISCUSSED WITH ALGERIANS AND MOROCCANS) WAS WHETHER PALESTINIANS COULD FIND AGREEMENT WITH THOSE STATES. SUCH AN AGREEMENT WITH HUSSEIN'S JORDAN WOULD NOT BE EASY, BUT AFTER GOLAN DISENGAGEMENT

AGREEMENT, NOTHING SEEMED IMPOSSIBLE ANYMORE. THERE SHOULD BE SOME WAY FOR BOTH PALESTINIANS AND JORDANIANS TO SIT DOWN AT GENEVA.

6. COMMENT: MAIN POLICY THRUST OF VISIT WAS OBVIOUSLY MAGHREBIAN UNITY WITH EMPHASIS ON GRADUALISM. BOURGUIBA'S PUBLIC STATEMENT IN WHICH HE MADE NO REFERENCE TO HASSAN AND CHATTI'S EVIDENT LACK OF ENTHUSIASM FOR RABAT VISIT -- TAKEN WITH RABAT'S REPORTING (RABAT 2999) -- SUGGESTS THAT ALTHOUGH TUNISIA AND MOROCCO MAY MAKE SAME NOISES VIS--VIS MIDDLE EAST, THERE ARE STILL LESS THAN FULL BROTHERLY FEELINGS BETWEEN BOURGUIBA AND HASSAN; AND THAT BOURGUIBA, UNDERSTANDABLY IS MORE CONCERNED WITH ALGERIA THAN WITH MOROCCO.
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